

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ALEXAN 00670 091254Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----012595 091255Z /53
O 091230Z AUG 78
FM AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
TO AMEMBASSY NICOSIA IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1942
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY ATHENS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALEXANDRIA 0670

EXDIS

FROM AMBASSADOR IN ALEXANDRIA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, CY
SUBJ: CYPRIOT FOREIGN MINISTER REQUESTS U.S. ASSISTANCE
WITH EGYPT RE: EL-SIBAI KILLERS

REF: NICOSIA 1998 (REPEATED ALEXANDRIA AS CAIRO 18520)

1. I WAS ABLE TO SHOW REFTEL TO THE SECRETARY SHORTLY
BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE THIS MORNING. HE THOUGHT IT BEST
THAT WE NOT ENGAGE OURSELVES IN THIS PROBLEM. IT IS
SOMETHING THAT THE CYPRIOTS MUST THEMSELVES WORK OUT WITH
THE EGYPTIANS.

2. FYI: AS YOU MAY KNOW, WE HAVE BEEN IN A CONTINUOUS
DIALOGUE WITH THE EGYPTIANS ABOUT THE KHARTOUN MURDERS
WHO ARE STILL BEING HELD HERE. AN ANALOGY COULD BE
DRAWN BETWEEN SADAT'S HOLDING THE KHARTOUN EIGHT AFTER
SUDANESE PRESIDENT NUMEIRY HAD ASKED HIM TO TAKE THEM OVER
AND THE PRESENT CYPRIOT REQUEST, BUT I SUSPECT THAT SADAT
IS NOT ANXIOUS TO TAKE ON A NEW BATCH OF CONVICTED
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PALESTINIAN ASSASSINS AND HOLD THEM HERE. HAVING THE
KHARTOUN EIGHT HERE HAS BEEN AWKWARD FOR HIM. SADAT
CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT THE KILLERS OF EL-SIBAI
SHOULD BE EXECUTED AND HAS LITTLE SYMPATHY FOR THE
SITUATION INTO WHICH KYPRIANOU HAS GOTTEN HIMSELF. END FYI.

3. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THE CYPRIOTS HAVE BEEN

WORKING THROUGH THE GREEK GOVERNMENT TO TRY TO ARRANGE SOME
SORT OF A MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY SETTLEMENT. IN MY JUDGE-
MENT, THEY SHOULD BE ADVISED TO CONTINUE TO USE THAT
CHANNEL OR THE BRITISH (AS THE PROTECTING POWER) FOR THIS
PURPOSE. WE HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN HERE AND A CERTAIN
AMOUNT TO LOSE BY INJECTING OURSELVES INTO THIS MESSY
AFFAIR. EL-SIBAI WAS A LONG TIME FRIEND OF SADAT'S, AND
THE PRESIDENT HAS STRONG FEELINGS ABOUT THE AFFAIR.
MCCLELLAND

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